

THE

MONTHLY



GULL

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OCTOBER MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held Thursday evening, the 10th inst., at 8 o'clock, in the Board Room of the Harbor Commissioners, Room 19, Second Floor, Ferry Building.

The speaker for the evening will be Mr. Brighton C. Cain, Naturalist, Oakland Council of Boy Scouts of America, subject: "How Boys and Birds Get Acquainted." Mr. Cain on account of his years of experience in scouting is exceptionally well qualified to give us an interesting and instructive discourse on this subject.

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OCTOBER FIELD TRIP will be taken on Sunday, October 13th, to Lake Merced. East Bay members should reach San Francisco about 8:30 A. M. Take Municipal car marked K, transfer to M car at St. Francis Loop beyond Twin Peaks tunnel, get off at Junipero Serra Boulevard, where party will form at 9:30. Bring luncheon and filled canteens. Time from ferry to meeting place about forty minutes.

The trip will be made down the ravine to the Lake and ending at Sloat Boulevard.

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BIRD REFUGE: President Hoover, by recent executive order, has set aside, as a refuge and breeding ground for birds, Snake Key, Dead Man or Bird Key and North Key, in the island group known as Cedar Keys, off the west coast of Levy County, Florida, west of Waccassassee Bay. The refuge will be known as the Cedar Keys Bird Refuge and will be administered by the Bureau of Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture. The islands in the new reservation serve as important nesting and wintering grounds for hundreds of aquatic birds, including several species of herons, pelicans and cormorants, some of which are becoming greatly depleted in numbers.—*American Field*, September 14, 1929.

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WOOD DUCKS ON PHOENIX LAKE, MARIN COUNTY: On Sunday, September 29th, while walking along the road around Phoenix Lake, the writer stopped to watch three pied-billed grebes playing and diving near the opposite shore. Shortly four ducks swam past but, assuming them to be the mallards usually found here, I paid no particular attention to them.

After the grebes finished their antics they swam away, then turning to the ducks which had swum into a little cove I was amazed beyond expression to see that they were wood ducks. Immediately turning back, following the trail around the lake, I was able to approach unnoticed to within sixty feet of them: one adult male, one immature male and two mature females. After studying them for fifteen minutes, I moved nearer when they took flight and flew to the end of the lake. Approaching them a second time they again took flight and lit in a nearby redwood tree.

CHAS. A. BRYANT.

THE SHORE LINE: To those without cars, time or means to "bird" at points remote from the city, our shore line makes ample amends.

The writer ever looks forward to the day that is to be spent on it. It is not alone the interesting sea and shore birds observed that claim the student's attention, but also the many dead birds that have been washed ashore, for among them may be found some of those ocean wanderers that rarely if ever touch the main land in life.

On August 18th a dead fork-tailed petrel was found.

On August 25th, eight Cassin Auklets, one black-footed albatross, two shearwaters (probably the pink-footed), one Baird cormorant and three rhinoceros auklets, all dead.

On September 22nd, along the beach from Fleishhacker Pool to Mussel Rock, a distance of five miles, five members of the Audubon Association found seventy-six dead birds, as follows: twenty-four murres, twenty-one gulls (western, California and Heermann), fourteen cormorants (Brandt and Farallon), three sooty shearwaters, two pigeon guillemots, two tufted puffins, two western and one eared grebe, one brown pelican, one northern phalarope, one Cassin auklet, two domestic pigeons and two unidentified sea birds.

This makes a list of twenty species found on this five-mile stretch of beach.

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C. W. LOCKERBIE.

ALASKA WATER-THRUSH: In the pursuit of new and interesting bird experiences it is not always necessary to go far afield or to visit new localities in order to obtain good results. Inasmuch as birds are constantly moving about, one may by frequent visits to the same place at different hours obtain rich rewards for working over the old ground. The writer has realized this more than once with reference to her frequent visits to the Chain of Lakes in Golden Gate Park, and the most recent reward was the observation of an Alaska water-thrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis notabilis*) Saturday, September 14th, 1929.

It is truly a beautiful bird and this particular one was most accommodating, allowing a long observation at close range. Resembling somewhat our dwarf hermit thrush (*Hylocichla guttata nana*) in size and shape, its back is plain olive gray and the under parts are yellowish marked with very regular brown dashes. A thin black line extends through the eye with a broader buffy one over the eye running back to the sides of the neck. Perhaps the most noticeable difference from other birds of this type is a constant upward jerking of the tail.

It has been reported but five times from the Pacific Coast, four of which were in southern California and only one from the San Francisco Bay region.

The following data is taken from Dawson's Birds of California: "Range: western North America and northern South America; breeds from southern British Columbia, central Montana, northwestern Nebraska, northern Minnesota and northwestern Michigan north to the limit of trees in extreme western Alaska; migrates chiefly east of the Rocky Mountains, through and over the Mississippi Valley, striking the Atlantic Coast from South Carolina southward; winters from the Bahamas, Cuba and Mexico south to northern South America."

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ALBINO SPOTTED SANDPIPER: Another interesting observation was made on the South Fork of the Eel River, at Stephens Grove, Humboldt County, August 27th, 1929. A bird was seen feeding among the rocks, which in general appearance and characteristic behavior resembled the spotted sandpiper, except that its plumage was entirely white and its feet and bill pinkish.

After watching it for some time another spotted sandpiper bearing all the approved markings joined it, as if to vouch for it, and the two continued feeding together. The fair individual was undoubtedly an albino of the species.

LAURA A. STEPHENS (Mrs. A. B.).

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AUGUST MEETING: The 152nd regular meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific was held on September 12th, 1929, in the Board Room of the Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Building, San Francisco, President C. A. Harwell presiding.

Field observations were reported as follows: Mrs. A. B. Stephens: August 15th. on the rocks at Cliff House, wandering tattlers, surf birds, black and ruddy turnstones; C. W. Lockerbie September 8th, at Dumbarton, five ruddy turnstones feeding in the mud, also five hundred white pelicans; Mrs. Earle G. Kelly reported on shore birds July 16th at Moss Landing: northern phalaropes, willets, godwits, Hudsonian curlews, western sandpipers, black-bellied plovers and avocets. The latter were feeding within a few yards of the highway, also on the same day pigeon guillemots were feeding young on Cliff Drive at San Jose Avenue in Santa Cruz and many winter wren families in Big Basin in middle of July. Miss Hibbard: birds seen at Crater Lake: Clarke nutcrackers in great numbers with Stellar jays scarce, prompting the question, "Do the Clarke nutcrackers drive the jays away?"

The talk for the evening was an interesting account of a motor trip made by Mrs. Kelly the first week of June to Portland.

She delightfully told of her experiences en route;—at Garberville with its many birds; on to Gold Beach, Oregon, with its buzzards; seeing nighthawks at Eugene and thereafter all along the way; on to Portland with its many streams, sloughs and the Columbia River, affording areas rich in bird life, study of which was made possible for her through the bird-minded inhabitants and the hospitable and excellently conducted field trips of the local Audubon Association. Mrs. Kelly told of visiting an old heron rookery with its two hundred nests, above which were flying many Vaux swifts, doubtless attracted there by the flies over the nests. She spoke of the abundance of summer warblers, vesper sparrows and Trail flycatchers, these latter taking the place of our western variety; of the scarcity of wood pewees and hummingbirds. She experienced the delight of hearing the nuptial song of the horned lark and of seeing the Alaska three-toed woodpecker.



SOME ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN THE LIFE OF A QUAIL

(Continued from last month)

During the past two years, I have had the opportunity to examine several dead quail that have been sent to me by those who have found them but the most searching field observations on my part in areas where I believed quail to be dying have thus far yielded only two specimens.

During the time that it has been my privilege to have been associated with the Division of Fish and Game, two diseases of quail have come to my attention, which, under certain circumstances, might well assume epidemic proportions. The former of these, which is similar to bird malaria and which has been subjected to experimental study, I have designated as parasitism due to a minute blood parasite, namely *Haemoproteus lophortyx*. The latter is a virulent infectious disease about which we know little as yet. I will discuss with you for a little while parasitism of the Valley Quail by *Haemoproteus lophortyx*. Later, if time permits, I shall tell you just briefly what little we know so far about the infectious disease also mentioned.

We have records of parasitism from the following places: Yountville, Napa, Clayton, San Jose, Santa Cruz, Salinas, King City, Altadena, Woodland, Berkeley, Orinda, Riverside, San Diego and Catalina Island. So it is evident that the distribution of the parasite is pretty general. While the percentage of infection is high, running to forty-five per cent, the majority of the cases are mild with apparently little injurious effects, indicating, it seems to me, that the disease is of long standing and that partial immunity is well established among

THE GULL

the birds. Several cases of sick quail that could not fly have been called to my attention. Only five fatal cases have come under my direct observation. Several types or stages of the disease produced by the parasite are recognizable.

(To be continued)



SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP was taken to Baumberg, Sunday the 15th, with Mrs. G. Earle Kelly and Mr. Arthur Myer, leaders.

The morning was gray with poor visibility which improved by noon.

As the party approached the first pond a huge flock of pintail ducks arose, without disturbing the shore birds which were present. Good observations were had of greater and lesser yellow-legs, godwits, and avocets. On the small ponds least and western sandpipers and northern phalaropes were plentiful but by no means as numerous as on the trip a year ago.

The hawk family was well represented about the marshes:—three white-tailed kites allowed close approach. A marsh hawk, sparrow-hawk and one large hawk of undetermined species were present.

After luncheon the party went to Dumbarton Bridge.

Two barn owls were flushed from a burrow in the cut at the east end of the salt pond. About one-half mile south a flock of some twenty-five or thirty white pelicans was resting on a dike. Caspian terns were everywhere, on and over the ponds and dikes south of the road, sixty-four being counted on one dike. Northern phalaropes were very numerous north of the road. A large flock of barn swallows flitted about the buildings, presumably in readiness for their southern migration.

Birds observed were: American eared grebe; American white pelican; Brandt cormorant; California great blue heron; American bittern; American pintail and shoveller ducks; northern turkey vulture; North American white-tailed kite; western red-tailed, marsh and desert sparrow hawks; ring-necked pheasant; American coot; northern killdeer; American black-bellied plover; greater and lesser yellow-legs; least and western sandpipers; marbled godwit; American avocet; black-necked stilt; northern phalarope; California gull; Coues Caspian tern; western mourning dove; American barn and northern burrowing owls; black phoebe; California horned lark; northern violet-green. barn and northern cliff swallows; Pacific Coast bush-tit; western Mexican bluebirds; California loggerhead shrike; San Francisco yellow-throat; western meadowlark; San Francisco red-winged and California Brewer blackbirds; English house sparrow; San Francisco brown towhee; Bryant Savannah and salt marsh song sparrows. Forty-five species.

Members in attendance were: Mesdames Bracelin, Kelly, Mexia; Misses Ames, Ayer, Berg, Boegle, Cockefair, Cohen, Hibbard, Kautz, Meader, Pringle, von Nienburg; Messrs. Harwell, Jencks Lockerbie, Myer. Guests: Misses Layman, Smith; Scouts Axelrod, Reed. Eighteen members and four guests.

C. W. LOCKERBIE, *Historian*.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

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Recording Secretary.....	Mrs. Bessie W. Kibbe.....	Room 510, Russ Bldg., San Francisco
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Meets second Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m., in the Board Room of the State

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